1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 808 Timbira SO8

584 762 152

the faveira with his bush-knife. In 1936 I was shown the spot and found the tree trunk lying on the ground in decay.

584 604 593

On the other hand, I know of cases in which a maternal uncle forbade his niece to marry a young lad who was obviously going to be a bad husband. In general, when marriage is in question a girl always consults her mother's brother in addition to her mother. Nyunkré, the daughter of my "sister" Pṛrãkwę'i, delayed her wedding for nearly half a year, waiting for my return to get my consent, notwithstanding the presence of another maternal uncle who had raised no objections to the marriage. On the other hand, a father never interferes in a girl's amatory or matrimonial affairs.

586 626 837

Even at present these people adhere to the principle that marriage with a virgin is indissoluble except on grounds of adultery and grave maltreatment. If either spouse indicates an intention to rupture the bond, he has to reckon with the disapproval of fellow-members of all the social units to which he belongs: they will publicly condemn him, send him a hąpín or a professional peacemaker, and bear down upon him until he yields. During a hunting trip a wakõkama had fallen in love with a wanton such as is always likely to accompany an expedition of this sort. On his return he did not wish to go back to his wife. The negotiations consumed several days, then two members of his age class seized him by his arms, dragging him at a trot to his wife's house, while the other classmates followed behind, laid him on the bed beside his wife, and made the two intertwine arms and legs. Thus the affair was settled. I witnessed the scene myself; the culprit's face is unforgettable: he almost died of humiliation and offered not the least resistance.

Similarly Pohl writes of the Põrekamekra:

> Ein solches Ehebündnis ist durchaus unauflöslich, und wenn es einem Indianer einfiele, sich von seinem Weibe zu trennen, was schon einigen in den Sinn kam, besonders wenn die Weiber früh alterten, so widersetzt sich die ganze Gemeinde einem solchen Vorhaben, und alle alten Indianer, deren Autorität von den jüngeren sehr geachtet wird, verhalten den Sträflichen zur Ordnung.[208]

PROHIBITED UNIONS

582

For the present Indians the principle of moiety exogamy is hardly of consequence any more, but marriage between relatives of the first and second degree in the ascending or descending line is tabooed. When I encountered one instance of cross-cousin marriage while constructing the diagrams illustrating name transference, my informant explained, "Yes, there are human beings as shameless as that!" The union of persons connected by the hąpín bond is likewise prohibited.

SORORATE AND LEVIRATE

587 607

I know of not a single case of a widower's marrying his deceased wife's sister, though in at least one instance this would have been easily possible. This is all the more remarkable because of the considerable familiarity permitted toward a wife's sister even from the period of betrothal on, so that I was sometimes in doubt which of the sisters was the wife. In 1930 the Rąmkõ'kamekra had pretty well decided on marrying me to Iromkré as soon as her term of office as vụ'tę' would terminate. Since this was not before 1933 I feigned ignorance of their intentions. Iromkré herself was quite sure of the part assigned to her, but as a vụ'tę' was obliged to maintain the proper reserve. On the other hand, her greatest pleasure was to throw her sister Kentapí and me together for playful social intercourse, which her mother obviously encouraged. Subsequently, a year before the close of her term, Iromkré married the second commandant of the kapranpotíkama, Kapẽrtuk.

[208] Reise, 2:196.

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

Within the whole span of my experience I observed a single instance of the levirate, an elderly widower marrying his younger brother's widow. It struck me as an exceptional case. There certainly was not the least obligation for such a step; on the contrary, several Indians seemed to regard the affair as a bit peculiar and the manner in which the man concerned, my "brother," chief Kukrãčę', told me about it sounded almost apologetic.

MATRILOCAL RESIDENCE; IN-LAWS

There is strict matrilocalism; even if a husband builds a separate dwelling for his wife, it is invariably erected beside her mother's. I know of no instance of a woman's spending as much as a single night in her husband's mother's house except to tend him during a serious illness, for in that case he would invariably be conveyed to his maternal home. Sometimes, as noted, a niece may be raised in her paternal aunt's house.

As a rule a young husband plays a very modest part in his mother-in-law's house. If his conduct is disapproved of, he is not indeed turned out of doors, but the other inmates simply ignore him. Unless, then, the union is of the indissoluble type, the poor fellow either turns over a new leaf or takes his sleeping mat, either returning to his mother's dwelling or joining his age class in the plaza.

During the first years of wedlock a man never communicates directly with his parents-in-law, his wife serving as an intermediary for either party. In the course of time—especially after the arrival of children—the rule is relaxed, that is, at first only between father-in-law and son-in-law, who henceforth converse with fair freedom from restraint. Finally, the wife's mother also addresses her daughter's husband, though a certain reserve is maintained inasmuch as they avoid meeting or addressing each other when by themselves. In case of a chance encounter the son-in-law gives the woman a wide berth.

On the other hand, a husband is quite free in his intercourse with his wife's brothers. In several instances I was struck by their inconsiderate use of the husband's personal property, and a certain Nyõhí once confidentially complained to me about the tyranny of his brothers-in-law. Connections by marriage never address each other by their names, but use the proper kinship terms unless they are each other's hąpín or kwų'nõ, which makes them substitute these terms. A woman calls a man "my son-in-law" even after the dissolution of the marriage.

A good son-in-law is, above all, expected to lay out a plantation for his wife and to supply her with meat. Many couples remain in the wife's maternal home for good; some erect one for themselves, but this always belongs to the wife, even after divorce, notwithstanding the fact that it was built by her husband.

From the matrilocal organization, coupled with feminine house and field ownership, as well as control of the children, it follows that the husband as such plays a minor role, his influence resting on personal merit. With the lapse of time some may thus attain an important position, others remain subordinate all their lives. In no circumstances is there any question of masculine dominance over a wife and children.

The contact with civilization, facilitating housebuilding and agriculture through the introduction of iron tools, enhanced the importance of women, while that of men rather decreased through the elimination of war and the diminution of hunting. A widow's destitution, a disowned wife's misery, a couple's quarrel over the control of their offspring—these are matters known to the Canella only as occurring among their civilized neighbors. After the husband's death the widow and her